

REMARKS

A. Request for Reconsideration

Applicant has carefully considered the matters raised by the Examiner in the outstanding Office Action but remains of the position that patentable subject matter is present. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the Examiner's position based on the above amendments and the following remarks.

B. Specification Amendments

The abstract of the disclosure had been objected to because it used legal terms.

Applicant has amended the abstract of the disclosure to eliminate the legal words and to place it into more idiomatic English.

The specification had been objected to because on pages 3 and 4 claim numbers had been included in the specification.

The specification has been amended to delete reference to the claim numbers.

The brief description of the drawings in the specification had been objected to as not being detailed enough.

The brief description of the drawings has been amended herein to be more detailed and to distinguish the different views from each other.

It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added by way of these amendments to the specification.

C. Claim Status

Claims 1-7 are pending in this application.

Claims 1-7 have been amended herein to place them into more conventional U.S. format by deleting the reference character numbers and using conventional U.S. transitional phrases.

Claim 1 has also been amended herein to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the present invention. The radial bearing has been defined such that the cylindrical roller bodies are positioned between the cylindrical sleeve and the inner ring. The best support for this amendment can be seen in figure 1 where roller bodies 9 are clearly positioned between inner ring 7 and cylindrical sleeve 2.

D. The Present Invention

One of the unique aspects of the present invention is that the radial bearing and the axial bearing are in a side-by-side arrangement. This side-by-side arrangement allows for a compact configuration and allows for maximum loadbearing capacity in the radial and axial direction while providing a favorable utilization of space in the radial direction. In other words, nominal radial space is used to arrive at the bearing of the present invention. Such arrangement is distinguishable from that taught in the cited references.

E. Prior Art Rejection

Claims 1 and 4-7 had been objected to being anticipated by Muntnich while claim 2 and 3 had been rejected as being unpatentable over a combination of Muntnich and Bauer.

Muntnich teaches an axial radial bearing, not a radial/axial bearing. The primary difference is that Muntnich's bearing is such that the radial forces are taken by roller element 4 and the axial forces are taken by roller element 1. Because of the arrangement of the axial and radial bearings, Muntnich's design provides one bearing on top of the other, see col. 1, line 42-43, and 47. Muntnich's radial bearing is 4, see col. 2, line 23. Muntnich's axial bearing is 1, see col. 2, lines 18-19. Thus, Muntnich's bearing is directly opposite the present invention because Muntnich's bearing provides the axial bearing on top of the radial bearing. In contrast, the axial and radial bearing in the present invention is side-by-side. In the present invention, the axial bearing is 12 and the radial bearing is 9.

When viewing Muntnich in the proper orientation, it can be seen that the axis of rotation of the radial bearing does not intersect the center of the axial bearing. Rather, in Muntnich, the axis of rotation of the axial bearing intersects the center of the radial bearing. This is because the two bearings are arranged in a different order.

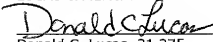
Furthermore, it is submitted that there is no teaching or suggestion to re-orient the bearing of Muntnich to arrive at the present invention. Respectfully, claim 1 as presented herein is patentable over Muntnich.

Turning to the secondary reference of Bauer, Bauer does have a side-by-side arrangement of a radial bearing and axial bearing, however, Bauer does not teach that the cylindrical sleeve that forms an outer running track of the axial bearing also forms the outer running track of the radial bearing. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that a combination of Bauer and Muntnich does not arrive at the present invention.

Since the dependent claims 2-7 are dependent on claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are patentable over the cited references taken alone or in combination.

F. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. Should any extensions of time or fees be necessary in order to maintain this Application in pending condition, appropriate requests are hereby made and authorization is given to debit Account # 02-2275.

Respectfully submitted,
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